



*Rewarding Learning*

**ADVANCED**  
**General Certificate of Education**  
**2015**

---

**Religious Studies**

**Assessment Unit A2 7**

*assessing*

**Religious Belief and Competing Claims**

**[AR271]**

**TUESDAY 2 JUNE, AFTERNOON**

---

**MARK  
SCHEME**

## GCE Religious Studies

### A2 Mark Scheme (A2 1 – A2 8)

#### Levels of Response

The specification requires that candidates demonstrate the following assessment objectives in the context of the learning outcomes and skills set out in the specification.

- Select and demonstrate clearly relevant knowledge and understanding through the use of evidence, examples and correct language and terminology appropriate to the course of study.

In addition, for synoptic assessment, A Level candidates should demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the connections between different elements of their course of study.

- Critically evaluate and justify a point of view through the use of evidence and reasoned argument.

In addition, for synoptic assessment, A Level candidates should relate elements of their course of study to their broader context and to aspects of human experience.

Each of the two assessment objectives has been categorised into five levels of performance relating to the respective abilities of the candidates. Having identified for each assessment objective listed opposite, the band in which the candidate has performed, the examiner should then decide on the appropriate mark within the range for the band.

There are separate levels of response for Section A and Section B of the A2 paper.

**A2 BANDS****AO1 (30 marks)**

<p><b>Band 5</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A full and highly informed response to the task.</li> <li>• Demonstrates comprehensive understanding and accurate knowledge.</li> <li>• A very high degree of relevant evidence and examples.</li> <li>• A very sophisticated style of writing set within a clear and coherent structure.</li> <li>• An extensive range of technical language and terminology.</li> <li>• An almost totally faultless use of spelling, punctuation and grammar.</li> </ul>	<b>25–30</b>
<p><b>Band 4</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A reasonable and well informed response to the task.</li> <li>• Demonstrates a high degree of understanding and almost totally accurate knowledge.</li> <li>• A very good range of relevant evidence and examples.</li> <li>• A mature style of writing set within a mainly clear and coherent structure.</li> <li>• A wide range of technical language and terminology.</li> <li>• A mainly accurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar.</li> </ul>	<b>19–24</b>
<p><b>Band 3</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A good response to the task.</li> <li>• Demonstrates a reasonable degree of understanding and mainly accurate knowledge.</li> <li>• A good range of relevant evidence and examples.</li> <li>• A reasonably mature style of writing with some coherent structure evident.</li> <li>• A good range of technical language and terminology.</li> <li>• Reasonably accurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar.</li> </ul>	<b>13–18</b>
<p><b>Band 2</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A limited response to the task.</li> <li>• Demonstrates some knowledge and understanding.</li> <li>• A basic range of evidence and/or examples.</li> <li>• Style of writing is just appropriate.</li> <li>• Structure is disorganised in places.</li> <li>• Limited range of technical language and terminology.</li> <li>• Limited command of spelling, punctuation and grammar.</li> </ul>	<b>7–12</b>
<p><b>Band 1</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A very basic response to the task.</li> <li>• Demonstrates minimal knowledge and understanding.</li> <li>• Little, if any, use of evidence and/or examples.</li> <li>• Inappropriate style of writing within a poor structure.</li> <li>• A very basic range of technical language and terminology.</li> <li>• Very poor use of spelling, punctuation and grammar.</li> </ul>	<b>0–6</b>

## AO2 (20 marks)

<p><b>Band 5</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A comprehensive and coherent response demonstrating an excellent attempt at critical analysis, supported by a high awareness of scholarly views.</li> <li>• Very good personal insight and independent thought expressed through a highly developed argument which is set, where necessary, in the context of wider aspects of human experience.</li> <li>• An extensive range of technical language and terminology.</li> <li>• An almost totally faultless use of spelling, punctuation and grammar.</li> </ul>	<b>17–20</b>
<p><b>Band 4</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A very good response demonstrating a very good attempt at critical analysis, supported by a good awareness of scholarly views.</li> <li>• Good personal insight and independent thought expressed through a developed argument which is set, where necessary, in the context of wider aspects of human experience.</li> <li>• A wide range of technical language and terminology.</li> <li>• A mainly accurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar.</li> </ul>	<b>13–16</b>
<p><b>Band 3</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A reasonable response demonstrating a good attempt at critical analysis, supported by an awareness of the views of some scholars.</li> <li>• Some personal insight and independent thought expressed through reasonable argument which is set, where necessary, in the context of wider aspects of human experience.</li> <li>• A good range of technical language and terminology.</li> <li>• Reasonably accurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar.</li> </ul>	<b>9–12</b>
<p><b>Band 2</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A limited response demonstrating a modest attempt at critical analysis, with limited awareness of scholarly views.</li> <li>• Limited personal insight and independent thought expressed through some argument.</li> <li>• A good range of technical language and terminology.</li> <li>• Reasonably accurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar.</li> </ul>	<b>5–8</b>
<p><b>Band 1</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A very basic response demonstrating little attempt at critical analysis, with minimal awareness of scholarly views.</li> <li>• Poor personal insight and/or independent thought.</li> <li>• Shallow argument.</li> <li>• Limited range of technical language and terminology.</li> <li>• Limited command of spelling, punctuation and grammar.</li> </ul>	<b>0–4</b>

## Section A

AVAILABLE  
MARKS

1 (a) An examination of the contribution of Charles Darwin to the Creation debate, with particular reference to Intelligent Design may include, e.g.:

- A brief outlining of Darwin's teachings concerning evolution
- An exploration of the impact of Darwin's teachings on the creation debate
- A brief exploration of the Intelligent Design argument
- Exploration of the impact of Darwin's theory on creation – as challenging Divine creation, the unique nature of humanity, the dating and time frame of creation
- Reference to key texts such as The Origin of Species, The Descent of Man, The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals
- Exploration of the views of Neo Darwinists concerning evolution and Intelligent Design
- Exploration of how evolution challenges creation myths
- Reference to specific issues such as the fossil and carbon dating controversies
- A critique of the contribution of Darwin, his reluctance to publish his work and his support for Divine creation within his writings
- Reference to the views of key thinkers, theistic and atheistic, concerning Darwinian teachings – Russell, Kant, Plantinga, Behe
- Reference to the subsequent use of evolutionary theory by theism and atheism alike
- Darwinian theory as providing support for Intelligent Design [30]

(b) A critical evaluation of the view that evolution has dealt a death blow to the traditional view of God may include, e.g.:

- Consideration of the portrayal of God as omnipotent, benevolent Creator as found in Genesis 1–3, Psalms
- The importance of the Biblical record and Biblical account of creation in particular to theism's portrayal of the Divine
- Reference to atheistic science's rejection of the Divine and any forms of Divine intervention
- An exploration to the views of relevant schools of thought – Creationism, Accommodationism, Neo Darwinism
- Examples of how evolution can challenge and/or be integrated in theistic views of the Divine
- The case in favour of a single act of creation, the universe as revealing Divine design, and God as the creator of all
- Reference to the views of selected scholars – Dawkins, Teilhard de Chardin, Behe
- Impact of advances in science allied to evolutionary theory
- Reference to the significance of creation myths/narratives within multiple faiths, including Islam, Christianity and Hinduism [20]

50

- 2 (a) A presentation of the case for, and discussion of exclusivism, with reference to religious belief may include, e.g.:
- An exploration of the term 'exclusivism'
  - The distinctive and unique nature of named religions and belief systems
  - Irreconcilable differences in belief systems and in sacred writings within religions
  - The unique nature of religious rituals and ceremonies
  - An exploration of Christian and/or Islamic exclusivism
  - Reference to selected Creeds or faith statements
  - The importance of evangelism and missionary outreach within selected world religions
  - An exploration of the nature of salvation and redemption
  - Reference to the dangers of inclusivism and/or pluralism, in diluting unique religious beliefs and teachings
  - Reference to specific examples of religious differences/conflict, for example, on the role and status of women, concerning food laws, attitude towards non-believers, the acceptable use of force
  - An exploration of the importance of religious education and faith schools
  - The dangers of promoting unity at the cost of individual faith messages
  - Reference to key thinkers who advocate this position [30]
- (b) A critical assessment of the view that in a pluralist society exclusivism is not just outdated, but also dangerous may include, e.g.:
- An exploration of the increasingly pluralistic nature of both society and religious belief
  - An exploration of the nature and impact of religious exclusivism within society
  - Recognition of religions as having mutual/common ground – the acceptance of Divine creation, the acknowledgment of the supernatural and the spiritual
  - The shared promotion of a religious message, of moral codes and beliefs
  - Modern media's insistence on a pluralistic approach to world religions
  - The call for mutual respect and tolerance of others faiths and beliefs
  - Reference to Interfaith groups, commissions and events, and to ecumenical and interfaith statements
  - The increasing challenge of atheism and the need for shared strategies to counter such challenges
  - Counterchallenges to the stated claim: exclusivism as an honest stating of a valid faith position – why follow any religious message unless convinced that it is the best route to Divine salvation?
  - Reference to selected sacred writings which assert and/or reinforce an exclusivist message
  - An exploration of specific religious teachings promoting harmony and tolerance rather than division and hatred
  - An exploration of the nature of religious fundamentalism
  - Insistence on pluralism as ironically reflecting an exclusivist position [20]

AVAILABLE  
MARKS

50

- 3 (a) With reference to the claim that ‘the concept of God like religion is an invention of the human mind’, a consideration of the contribution of **one** psychologist to an understanding of religious belief may include, e.g.:

- Reference to the quotation as stated

#### Jung

- An exploration of Jung’s views concerning religious belief, religion’s function in harmonising the psyche
- Reference to Jung’s views concerning the distinction between the conscious and unconscious mind and the creation of archetypes
- An exploration of the archetypes of the persona and the shadow and their links to the concepts of evil/Satan
- Reference to religious imagery as archetypal
- Reference to the writings of Jung concerning religious belief – ‘Symbols of Transformation’, ‘Psychology and Religion’
- An exploration of the process of individuation and the role religion plays in this process
- Reference to Jung’s work with schizophrenic patients
- The benefits of religious belief and the potential harm caused by the rejection of religion

#### Freud

- An exploration of Freud’s view of the origins of religion
- An exploration of Freud’s teachings concerning the Primal Horde and Oedipus Complex and how these relate to religion
- Freud’s view of religion as a man made phenomena
- Freud’s view of the Divine as Father figure and Totem
- An exploration of the function of religion enabling humanity to cope with fears of natural causes, notably death
- Reference to selected writings of Freud, for example, ‘The Future of an Illusion’, ‘Civilisation and its Discontents’
- Freud’s rejection of religious belief/faith as universal neurosis
- A critique of Freud’s work and teachings [30]

- (b) A critical evaluation of the view that the main problem for religious truth claims is that they lie outside the boundaries of science may include, e.g.:

- An exploration of the limitations of scientific inquiry in addressing the supernatural and Divine
- Religion and religious truth claims as lying outside the realm of empirical research and study
- An exploration of what is meant by ‘religious truth claims’
- An exploration of the origins of religion as man made or Divinely inspired
- The limitations in exploring religion and religious truth claims in human terminology
- Reference to the views of fideism, belief as primarily a faith decision, revelation above reason
- Reference to conflict within psychology concerning the validity of religious faith
- A critique of the methods, assumptions and bias of selected psychologists

AVAILABLE  
MARKS

- A critique of the findings of psychology, the limitations of science in understanding the supernatural and the complexity of the human mind
- Counterchallenges to the stated claim: an exploration of the contribution and impact of key psychologists regarding religious truth claims – Jung, Freud
- Reference to psychology's role in shedding light on the origins, development and function of religious truth claim
- Psychology as providing valuable insights into the human mind and the role of religious symbols, images and archetypes
- Reference to other challenges to religious truth claims including the doubt concerning the very existence of God, the challenge of the continued existence of evil and the possibility of miracles
- The views of Sam Harris regarding science and morality [20]

AVAILABLE  
MARKS

50

- 4 (a) An identification and consideration of the main features of Humanism, with particular reference to its views on religion and morality may include, e.g.:
- Humanism’s focus on the value and integrity of each human being
  - An exploration of the core principles of Humanism, its focus on democracy and a shared vision of humanity
  - An exploration of Humanist morality, Humanism’s care and respect for the environment
  - The views of Humanist thinkers such as Huxley, Blackham, Smoker
  - Reference to key writings such as Humanist Manifestos
  - Humanism’s worship of the human and rejection of the Divine
  - Humanism’s focus on the temporal world rather than the spiritual realm
  - Secular Humanism’s rejection of religious morality, and all forms of religious authority
  - Humanism’s provision of alternatives to religious rituals – naming and coming of age ceremonies, marriages and burial services [30]

(b) A critical evaluation of the claim that Christian and Humanist world views are impossible to reconcile may include, e.g.:

- Humanism’s rejection of God as intellectually superfluous, a god-of-the-gaps and a harmful delusion
- Humanism’s rejection of religious belief as psychologically damaging and divisive in nature
- Humanism’s rejection of all forms of religious leadership and authority
- Reference to specific areas of disagreement, concerning the origins and ultimate future of humanity
- Humanism’s call for the abolition of state approved religion and Religious Education in schools
- Counterchallenges to the stated claim, common views of Humanism and Christianity concerning humanity’s worth and equality
- Reference to the views of Christian Humanism
- The shared positivism of Christianity and Humanism concerning humanity’s future
- Reference to allied teachings such as the demand for equality, environmental concerns, and concern for the vulnerable and oppressed
- Reference to selected Humanist associations, e.g. The British Humanist Association [20]

**Section A**

**AVAILABLE  
MARKS**

50

**100**

## GCE Religious Studies

### A2 Mark Scheme (A2 1 – A2 8)

#### Synoptic Assessment

#### Levels of Response

The specification requires that candidates demonstrate the following assessment objectives in the context of the learning outcomes and skills set out in the specification.

- Select and demonstrate clearly relevant knowledge and understanding through the use of evidence, examples, correct language and terminology appropriate to the course study. In addition, for synoptic assessment, A level candidates should demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the connections between different elements of their course of study.
- Critically evaluate and justify a point of view through the use of evidence and reasoned argument. In addition, for synoptic assessment, A Level candidates should relate elements of their course of study to their broader context and to aspects of human experience.

Each of the two assessment objectives has been categorised into five levels of performance relating to the respective abilities of the candidates.

Having identified, for each assessment objective listed overleaf, the band in which the candidate has performed, the examiner should then decide on the appropriate mark within the range for the band.

It is important that in the marking of the synoptic assessment unit, assistant examiners take account of the candidate's abilities in drawing together strands of knowledge and understanding from at least two different content areas.

Using the chosen theme, candidates will be expected to explore connections between elements of the selected areas of study. They should make appropriate use of the content as set out in the subject content for each module.

The five strands of knowledge and understanding act as a common and unifying structure for the specification. These are:

- the key concepts within the chosen areas of study, (e.g. religious beliefs, teachings, doctrines, principles, ideas and theories) and how these are expressed in texts, writings and/or practices
- the contribution of significant people, tradition or movements to the areas studied
- religious language and terminology
- major issues and questions arising from the chosen areas of study
- the relationship between the chosen areas of study and other specified aspects of human experience

In particular candidates should demonstrate the ability to relate such connections to other aspects of human experience.

**A2 BANDS****AO1 (30 marks)**

<p><b>Band 5</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A full and comprehensive understanding of the connections between the selected areas of study in relation to the theme.</li> <li>• Well integrated response.</li> <li>• Clear and critical analysis.</li> <li>• Highly accurate use of evidence and examples.</li> <li>• Sophisticated style of writing. Very well structured and coherent throughout.</li> </ul>	<b>25–30</b>
<p><b>Band 4</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A high degree of understanding of the connections between the selected areas of study in relation to the theme.</li> <li>• A well integrated response.</li> <li>• Some very good critical analysis.</li> <li>• Mainly accurate use of evidence and examples.</li> <li>• Mature style of writing.</li> <li>• Well structured and coherent throughout.</li> </ul>	<b>19–24</b>
<p><b>Band 3</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A good understanding of the connections between the selected areas of study in relation to the theme.</li> <li>• For the most part an integrated response.</li> <li>• Reasonable degree of critical analysis.</li> <li>• A good degree of accurate evidence and examples.</li> <li>• Reasonably mature style of writing.</li> <li>• Some evidence of good structure and coherence.</li> </ul>	<b>13–18</b>
<p><b>Band 2</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A limited understanding of the connections between the selected areas of study in relation to the theme.</li> <li>• Mere juxtaposition of the two areas of study, perhaps emphasising one content area at the expense of another.</li> <li>• A limited attempt at critical analysis.</li> <li>• Insufficient use of accurate evidence and examples.</li> <li>• Immature style of writing.</li> <li>• Lacking in structure and coherence.</li> </ul>	<b>7–12</b>
<p><b>Band 1</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A basic understanding of the connections between the selected areas of study in relation to the theme.</li> <li>• Demonstrating only partially accurate knowledge of the different content areas studied.</li> <li>• Little attempt, if any, at critical analysis.</li> <li>• Inappropriate style of writing with a very basic structure.</li> </ul>	<b>0–6</b>

## AO2 (20 marks)

<p><b>Band 5</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A comprehensive analysis of the statement in relation to connections made between the areas of study and other aspects of human experience.</li> <li>• Very effective comparison and evaluation of scholarly viewpoints.</li> <li>• Mature personal insight and independent thought.</li> <li>• A very well sustained and critical argument, expressed accurately and fluently with considerable sophistication using a wide range of terminology.</li> </ul>	<b>17–20</b>
<p><b>Band 4</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A good analysis of the statement in relation to connections made between the areas of study and other aspects of human experience.</li> <li>• Very good comparison and evaluation of scholarly viewpoints.</li> <li>• Good personal insight and independent thought.</li> <li>• A well sustained and critical argument, expressed accurately, fluently and using a range of terminology.</li> </ul>	<b>13–16</b>
<p><b>Band 3</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A reasonable analysis of the statement in relation to connections made between the areas of study and other aspects of human experience.</li> <li>• Very good comparison and evaluation of scholarly viewpoints.</li> <li>• Some evidence of personal insight and independent thought.</li> <li>• A line of argument, expressed accurately and using some relevant terminology.</li> </ul>	<b>9–12</b>
<p><b>Band 2</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A limited analysis of the statement in relation to connections made between the areas of study and other aspects of human experience.</li> <li>• Some comparison and evaluation of scholarly viewpoints.</li> <li>• Limited personal insight and independent thought.</li> <li>• Little evidence of critical argument.</li> <li>• Inaccuracies evident.</li> </ul>	<b>5–8</b>
<p><b>Band 1</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A basic analysis of the statement in relation to connections made between the areas of study and other aspects of human experience.</li> <li>• Little, if any, comparison and evaluation of scholarly viewpoints.</li> <li>• Minimal personal insight and independent thought.</li> <li>• A basic attempt to follow a line of argument.</li> <li>• Imprecisely expressed.</li> </ul>	<b>0–4</b>

## Section B

- 5 (a) An outline and examination of some of the main ideas that underlie atheistic and theistic leadership, with reference to at least two different areas of study may include, e.g.:
- Exploration of a range of ideas and/or principles underlying leadership, religious or otherwise
  - An exploration of the term leadership and a leader's role
  - An analysis of the call, vision and message of religious and atheistic leadership
  - A discussion of the key ethical demands of leadership
  - The origins of leaders' authority
  - An exploration of such shared aspects/features such as engaging with conflict, challenging and/or supporting the status quo, asserting a distinctive world view
  - The dangers of fundamentalism and division/schism
  - The distinction between good and bad, and weak or strong leadership
  - An exploration of terms such as fascism, dictatorship, authoritarianism and tyranny
  - An exploration of scholarly views on the nature of leadership
  - Reference to different types and styles of leadership and their allied ideas
  - An exploration of the experiences of two or more leaders, theistic and atheistic, historical or contemporary [30]
- (b) With reference to other aspects of human experience, a critical assessment of the view that in a largely secular world religious leadership is constantly challenged may include, e.g.:
- An exploration of the demands presented to religious leaders in a secular, pluralist and often cynical age
  - Reference to the specific nature and role of religious leadership
  - An exploration of the life and work of selected religious leaders and the challenges and controversies they face
  - Reference to the challenge of selected atheistic leaders to the notion of theistic leadership
  - An exploration of the failings of selected religious leaders, contemporary and/or historical
  - Reference to issues such as the challenge to religious authority and religious truths, the demand for moral relativism
  - A discussion of the often autocratic and judgemental nature of religious leadership
  - Counterchallenges to the stated claim: the continued popularity of religious leadership
  - Humanity's continued need for religious and moral guidance
  - The religious leader as providing model leadership and example for their followers/disciples
  - Reference to the teachings and writings of selected religious leaders
  - An exploration of the context in which religious leaders work – historical and/or contemporary [20]

Section B

Total

AVAILABLE  
MARKS

50

50

150





